To the meek and open hearted Lambes, and Flock of Heaven, in meekneſs of Love, with Greetings of Peace from the Seat of Infinite Mercy; tendered unto, and ſent to be read among them all, who live in the humble State.

THere was a time of blackneſs and darkneſs, which covered all fleſh, and the guilt of ſin was upon all conſciences; and hardneſs of heart poſſeſſed every veſſel, and the minds of all was a ſtray from God, and their ſouls in the bonds of iniquity, in the day when none was able to deliver his brother, O who can utter the diſtreſs and the languiſhing ſtate, which the sheep then ſcattered were in, O the ſecret groanes of the outcaſts of Iſrael which God hath now gathered, why ſhould it be forgotten, who could pluck their feet then out of the ſnare, or deliver their ſoul from death; had not the Lord in mercy looked down from Heaven, ſurely many had ſunk in the pit of miſery, and never come to ſee the light of the morning, for the which the bowels of the humble yearned in ſecret, and the ſighs were deep in the ſolitary place.

And then did the Lord in the bowels of his mercy let open his eare, and for his own names ſake had regard unto the complaint of the poor and needy, and he cauſed light to break out of darkneſs, and truth to ſpring from its ſecret hidden place, and life to grow up in the midſt of death, and to break through the powers of darkneſs, and the Lord in his power gave utterance to his ſervants and meſſengers, and then were the words of his truth as food to the hungry, and with much gladneſs of heart was the ſound of the way of life by many received; then did love beggin to ariſe in the heart, and a tenderneſs in the bowels, and a willingneſs in the mind, and then was a joy like the joy of harveſt among the people, and many began to invite one another, ſaying come and we will return to the Lord, and we will reſolve to walk in his paths for ever, then was the voice of thanksgiving among the People, and the wayes of the Lord became more delightſome then Gold, and the footſteps of righteouſneſs more pleaſant than all the Treaſure in the world. O it even melts the heart to remember the dayes that are paſt, and to conſider the infinite goodneſs of him that is the God of the poor and needy, then were many made willing to run and to leave their filthy gar-

ments behind them, even before they well knew how to do it, O how loathsome was sin in that day, and how wearisome was the land of darkness, and how desirable even beyond expression, was the unsatisfied thirsting soul after the presence of God: could the treasure of the earth then have given peace? or could Silver have satisfied the hungry heart? or could the choysest love of the most neareſt relations have quenched the thirst of the perched ground? Surely none but the Lord was then desired, yea other lovers became as loathsome, and other delights became burthensome to the weary Travellers and all vanities began to vanish as a vapour of smoak, and the wind of Heaven was dayly a scattering the shafe, and the barren Womb mourned for the quickning life of God, who had put it into the hearts of his long afflicted scattered ones, to follow him in the wayes of truth and equity, and then did the Lord visit such again and again in his loving kindness, by his servants, whose living words of truth through them, did yet more open the understandings, and hearts, and satisfie the judgements of the humble people, in the knowledge of the way to rest and peace, in leaving the evil and chusing the good, and to walk and come to live therein for ever.

And then came the time of tryal and exercise, when the cross must be taken up to the worlds wayes, and also foolish vanities left behind, and the needless words no longer used, nor that religion continued any longer, in which made nothing perfect: then did the people gaze and wonder, and the relations and the acquaintance stood like as from David afar off, and then was every ones greateſt enemy with the light found in his own house, then did the Tribes of the earth mourn, then did the Dragon stretch forth his power, then did the doubtings, and fears, and thoughts, and unbelief come roleing in like floods, O the straights that many then were in, even seeming greater than any before, and none but the Lord could deliver, so that then the cries were doubled, and the secret groanes came on a fresh again, and the greater the cries of such were, the more they prevailed with him that was to help, but with his rod he forced them to submit unto his will, by departing out of that which had caused him to frown upon them, and by leaving that which had polluted their dwelling, and as they began to obey him therein, so he began to let forth the smiles of his favour towards them, and when they offended again he chastized them sore, and scourged them for their negligence, and corrected them because they forgot their obedience to his will, and as thereby they drew neer unto him, he eased the stroak of his Justice, & let them taſt of his mercy, & sometimes invited them with love as a father draweth the child: and thus he left not working with them, and in them by his own secret wisdome and power, until he had brought them to be after the desire of his heart, that he might delight in them for ever, and that they might never more be scattered upon the barren hills, nor yet the dark mountains.

And as obedience in truth and Innocency was willingly yeilded to the Lord; peace began to take hold; and satisfaction got some entrance, and a little secret

hope there was which became as an Ancker to the ſoul, againſt the ſtormy time, and alſo in the midſt thereof; and as Iniquity was departed from ſo there came into the humble heart ſome ſatisfaction from God; and ſome ſtability in his way of righteouſneſs, and then refreſhings of life attended the heart in the morning, and the water which reviveth the Thirſty began to open it ſelf in the midſt of a barren Land; and then nothing was more deſired then the living upon that food with which the God of heaven doth nouriſh only his Children; which he freely gave and brought down even neer to the Tents of Iſrael, and he cauſed them to know his ſtatutes and his judgements, and he put his perfect Law in the midſt of them, and his mercy Seat within the Vaile, that they might aske Counſel at the living Oracle, and he gave them his ſpirit, which all the circumciſed of heart do rightly know to be the cheifeſt good, and to this end did he beſtow that moſt pretious gift upon them, and gave that ſpirit of life into them, even to guid, counſel, and direct, informe, inſtruct, reprove, defend, and ſuccour them and nouriſh their ſouls for evermore, and ſo he ſet before them the way in which they ſhould walk with him, wherein he would be their father and the Rock of their ſtrength, and made known unto them the ſecret miſteries of his heavenly beſſed will, which had been long concealed; and doth yet ſo remaine form the diſobedient, and covered from the Children of men.

And when even the God of Abraham Iſack and Jacob had done all this, and much more for you. O ye now well beloved freinds: then did he begin to try your patience, and to exerciſe you yet further to prove you, and to make known unto you even more that which had long been in the heart, and then he ſuffered a calme to come over you & much quietneſs there was with many & then did the enemy begin to aſay again to bring into careleſneſs, and preſent a ſpirit of ſlumber, with dulneſs, and negligence attending, and then the ſeed was again burthened therewith, and the upright hearted durſt not give way thereunto, before whoſe eyes the pure heavenly fear ſtill remaineth, ſurely it were almoſt endleſs to relate the ſundry tryals and ſtates which hath been known among the flock of Jacob. Who could have believed that the ſtrong ſhould have been ſo tempted as they were, and the mighty ſo aſaulted divers ways as they have been, and yet that the weakeſt who continued in the grace, which teacheth to deny ungodlineſs ſhould ſtand and remaine, and how wonderfully hath the Lord preſerved his whole flock unto this day, even ſo that with true gladneſs of heart in living praiſes it might truly be ſaid, that no weapon formed againſt Gods Iſrael hath to this day yet ever proſpered, though no man hath appeared either in feild or Court on their behalfe, nor viſable hand appeared for the defence of the flock of Heaven, O where is that Lamb of the fould who now ſtands in the Covenant of redemption that cannot breath forth the praiſes of God, in the heart breaking power of his Love and the ſenſible feeling of his tender unſpeakable mercies: Behold O freinds the goodneſs of God is unutterable, ye I have not words to expreſs it, and ſuch that feel it may taſt of it, and drink of the fulneſs

thereof, beyond the narrowneſs of my broaken ſpeech, and let ſuch draw neere unto me, and let thoſe that which bendeth and cloaſeth up in the bowels, that we may meet at the entrance of Wiſdomes gate, and live one with another and one in another, ſo as the world did never know; neither in their nature ſhall ever underſtand for my heart is fil'd with love, and my dwelling is inlarged with the boundleſs borders of peace and my life ſtreames forth in meekneſs; Behold there is none can ſtop it, where the ſeed ſprings up as a Lilly, and where the dawning of the day is witneſſed, where undefiled love which cannot think evil hath its reſting place, and where the true ſimplicity of meekneſs remaines.

Even there my lines are read, my words are heard my mind is known my language underſtood my love received, and even my life takes enterance; What ſhall I ſay I am with, neere or in the midſt of all the Innocent Lambs by the vertue of that power and inviſible ſpirit which filleth all in all? and in ſilence with you could I long reſt, where the world ſhould neither know nor yet perceive me, and the ſame bread which I receive in the inviſible power, and break unto, or diſperce among the Lambs of God; who can feed upon no other, Even ſo the ſame is it by which my ſoul at preſent doth live, Yea behold I live who once was dead: And my life is hid among the reſt with Chriſt in him, from whence the Heavenly food, and the ſouls ſaving, and hearts ſatisfying power doth come.

And this is to ſtir up your minds, & to put you in remembrance of the Lords dealing with you, and his large Loving kindneſs towards you and his effectual work of love in you, that you may never forget him, nor be unmindful of his fatherly pity towards us all, when we were all in our low eſtate, and that you may feel the revivings of his vertue, and the Inlivnings of his power, and the quicknings of his Spirit, That you may grow therein and wax fruitfull to God: and come to be ſeated, and eſtabliſhed in the land of life, Bleſſed from Heaven, with much more fruitful increaſe then the Land of Goſhan; That the fruit of Lebannon may be known and the Roſe of Sharon, and your ſelves as the Ceaders that are full of Seap and your life as the Vine that never wanteth nourihment, whoſe fruit aboundeth to the glading of the Vine Dreſſor, That the Lord my rejoyce over his heritage, and delight himſelf in the midſt of Zion, and be glorified in his people, and admired of all them that beleive.

THe Lord God of Heaven preſerve all every where, in the Love, long ſuffering, forbearance meekneſs; gentleneſs; out of the ſtrife, or ſelf ſeeking: For ſurely woe will come upon that ſpirit wherever the Lord finds it, and even the Lord knoweth the deſires of my heart in true ſimplicity hath been, That his right-

teous

tions *Iudgments might paſs betimes upon every appearance thereof in my ſelf, Neither do I believe that God will ever proſper it in any; nor any with it; Therefore my Exhortation in the Everlaſting Love of the God of Heaven is. That you all every where live in true brotherly love, and remember* Ioſephs *advice to his brethren, that they fall not out by the way: The Heavenly God of power, and life and vertue keep you out of all this, in the life of Wiſdome and meekneſs; where Strife ſhall never inhabit, nor death enter within the walls of* Zion, *in which their dwelling is, who keep themſelves undefil'd, and remaines in the fear of God, to whom I commit you all, and to the power of the word of his ſaving grace, praying to the Lord for you, That ever more you may continue in the Love of Chriſt. From the feelling and refreſhings whereof in the heart, this is written unto you by him that in the truth can ſerve the leaſt of you,*

Being your Freind Humphery Smith.

And Friends this is a time of quietneſs & ſtillneſs, or a time for you ſo to be, and there hath been a large time of gathering; & for convincing, & now the Lord is proving and trying them that are gathered. And after this time bleſſed and thrice happy ſhall they be that are found faithful in it, and worthy to be Crowned with Heavenly honour, and to be further imployed in Gods ſervice, and to remaine as Pillers among the flock of Heaven, and as Lights to invite others home to the dwelling of God. And now ſhould all friends be kept in wiſdome; and take heed what words they uſe among men, or concerning any men; though they do contrive againſt us; had the Lord left us where they are, and ſet them where he hath plated us: then might we have been this day as ignorant of the way of peace towards Enemies, and of the path of Innocency and Righteouſneſs as they now are, but the Lord hath ſhewed us mercy; And I ſay the God of heaven forgive them and defend us; And all that dwels in this may come at laſt to ſee a time of greater gathering then ever yet was; Oh my Pen cannot write it. And if all were quiet in their own meaſures, and little at all were moved in that meaſure, either to write, Print or ſpeak at this time, waiting ſingly upon God; Oh he would plead for us, and he alone would help us, and keep us as in his Armes, until the indignation were over paſt, And this I write that you might know of my continual confidence in the Lord, if he had, or did not at this time raiſe up, or make uſe of any of us to help him, or to be workers together with him. But a remnant he hath whoſe hearts he Inlargeth with prayer, and ſome of them with ſtrong inward deſires and groans & ſome with utterance to declare the good will of God unto others in your aſſemblys, and ſome ſteadfaſtly to believe in God that he will never leave us, and all this aſcends up before the Lord even as one ſacrifice, and he that hath heard and had mercy on us when we were not his people, and turned not back our complaints in that day; O how ſhall he now forget us, now we are his people, and are purchaſed unto

him

him with a Ransome more pretious then all the Gold in the World; who is it among all the flock of God; but have already had much experience of his Love, good will and mercy; and wherefore then should any of the sons or daughters of Zion, suppose that God will ever forsake or leave them in distress; I even say doubtless and certainly it will not be so, but the Lord will stand by us; and the God of the whole earth will go before us, and the wonderful, dreadful, powerful presence of the most high will be with us, over us, amongst us, and in us, for ever more, and we shall certainly be preserved by his power.

And by this my tenders of love in those Lines, all the dear and humble hearted freinds of Christ may hear from me, and underst and that somthing of the virtue of the Vine, is, and remaineth in me, and if the will of God should be so, that my body suffer in this close unsavery Prison many months or several years longer, yet shall the Lord be my God for ever and my rest unto the end of troubles, and in silence and secret shall, and doth, my heart and soul, poure forth intercession to the Throne of power, in the behalfe of his own truth and people, and for every feeble plant which God hath planted.

And when I have put you in mind that you ought not to forsake the assembling of your selves together, I leave you to God at present. H. S.

Winchester *Prison the* 30*th of the first Month* 1662.

AND you should all take heed of that which would lead you up an easier way then by the light that condemns sin, and verrifies and troubles you; for by it doth God speak, and in it calls for repentance; and in it strive with you, and many more so strongly, that they cannot rest night nor day, being not yet reconcile to it, but this consider that this will not always strive with you, therefore while the light is, and is not put out, if you will hear his voice, by whome God speaks peace, that peace you might enjoy for ever, then take heed of that by which a hardness comes upon the heart, and a Vaile so thick with unbeliefe that the true mourning is done away there cannot be then a secret crying unto the Lord; for helpe and deliverance in the true brokeness of heart, which openeth it to God; with bowels of Love and teares, wherby Gods mercy is felt, but a hardness upon the heart, and a wrong thing aske for peace in the unbeliefe, from that, which darkneth, take heed of this thing, and this know assuredly that when trouble comes in the inward parts, and the rumour of War is hard between the two Nations, Jacob *and* Esau *both in the Womb, and the light condemning in the heart, which hath been Fleshly, and the Witness of God awakning the Conscience that then if there be not a brokeness thereby, and a mollifying of the heart and a humbling of the lofty part, then will hardness take place, and Rebellion prevail with thee against the light. Therefore in its season let these things have entrance in you, and come to that which can receive it in love faithfulness, and plainess as it is written.* H. S.

Deare

DEare Lambs of my Fathers fould, keep cloſe together in the unity of the holy Spirit, in this day which is coming upon you, for you will be driven as ſheep to the ſlaughter, but I ſay, in that which was, before the wrath of the enemy was, fear not, for the horſe and the rider ſhall be overthrown, by which the rider ſhall be diſinabled to go on in his purpoſe: for I looked and beheld, that the fore feet of his horſe was chained, and a fence was in his way, and by reaſon of the eagerneſs of his horſe, he was overthrown, by which means he was maimed of his arme; and you were left upon your green Paſtures, though ſome of your wooll was ſcattered and waſted, which is the worſt thing that ſhall befal you: if you keep cloſe to God, he will certainly keep you in this day and houre which is coming, yea and is even at hand, watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, yea, what I ſay unto one, I ſay unto all, watch, and fear not man, but God, ſo will you be kept clean over all to his everlaſting praiſe for ever and ever ſo ſaith my ſoul Amen.

Who am your ſuffering Brother, *known by the name of* Charles Baley.

Seen and given forth in *Dover* priſon the 15*th.* day of the 1 month, 1661.

Jeremiah Elizabeth Joane

The End.